

## **Housing Rehab Grant Helps Beautify City**

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WOODBURY -- The Neighborhood Preservation Program can assist in the rehabilitation of at least twelve more homes in the city this year, thanks to a \$300,000 Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation Grant from the state Department of Community Affairs.

The city currently receives \$100,000 annually from the DCA, part of a competitive 5-year grant program aimed at neighborhood preservation. The additional money will help expand the existing program's housing rehabilitation capabilities, Virginia Horn explained.

"We now have access to an additional \$300,000 to renovate owner-occupied low- and moderate-income homes in the NPP target area," said Horn, program coordinator for the NPP. "That funding basically goes to providing new roofs, new heaters, upgrading the electrical system or weatherization."

Woodbury is one of 35 cities across the state that are participating in the DCA's rehabilitation program, and the city has been participating in the grant program since 1998.

Woodbury's NPP targets "most of South Woodbury," Horn said, with the goal of helping homeowners make necessary repairs to their homes. So far, the program has helped close to 60 homes, Horn said.

Along with home rehabilitation, the program also provides community activities such as a spring Clean-Up Day, a garden clinic and even a yard make-over contest. Again, the goal of these programs is to help the residents living in the program's target area.

"There's a group of residents who belong to the resident organization," Horn explained. "We meet with them once a month, and they pretty much direct how they want the program to proceed with the funding we get."

"The program is pretty much driven by the needs of the residents, and that's the way it should be," she added.

Residents interested in applying for assistance can view the coverage maps, check their eligibility and download an application from the city's Web site <http://www.woodbury.nj.us> under "About Woodbury," Horn said.

Applications can also be picked up and dropped off at City Hall on Delaware Avenue.